

**Will David Ortiz have another 50-home run season?**

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Get breaking news from Sean McAdam at Red Sox camp all spring training at [projosports.com/redsox](http://projosports.com/redsox)

**The leaders**

The top scorers in R.I. high school girls basketball, based on statistics supplied to The Journal:

	PPG
Ashley O'Dell, Lincoln	22.6
Kayla Rogers, Narragansett	13.7
Arianna DeSimone, Cr. West	12.8
Mohogany Stephens, Central	12.1

For up-to-the-second stats and scores: [hsgametime.com/rhodeisland](http://hsgametime.com/rhodeisland)

SECTION B



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**SAINT JOSEPH'S 90, URI 83**

# MIGHTY TUMBLE



PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / BILL MURPHY

Emily Holt of La Salle Academy competes in the vault at yesterday's R.I. Interscholastic League gymnastics championships. Holt was part of the Rams' championship effort. **Story, Page B6.**



PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GLENN OSMUNDSON

South Kingstown's Ryan Garr exults as he realizes he's won the 100 freestyle with a time that breaks a 27-year-old state record during yesterday's boys swimming meet. **Story, Page B6.**



PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / KRIS CRAIG

Cranston West wrestler Shawn Giblin, right, goes over the 125-pound bracket with coach Matt Claeson, center, after Giblin took his third straight individual title and CW won its third straight team title at the RIIL championship meet. **Story, Page B6.**



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GLENN OSMUNDSON

Saint Joseph's Garrett Williamson, left, and Parfait Bitee of URI go all-out in the pursuit of a loose ball during the second half of yesterday's Atlantic 10 Conference game at the Ryan Center.

## Rams became soft on defense as competition got harder

SOUTH KINGSTOWN — The challenge here is to describe URI's disappointing string of losses as articulately, and accurately, as Saint Joseph's coach Phil Martelli did the Hawks' recent string of defeats, which came to an end yesterday at the Ryan Center, 90-83.

"We had lost three of four in not very glorious fashion," Martelli said. "We were dreadful against Duquesne, we spit it up against Xavier, and we didn't play with any defensive purpose against La Salle."

And it's not as if Martelli was all that impressed with the way his Hawks played yesterday.

"I don't think we played great," he said. "I don't think we were hitting on all cylinders."

What the Hawks were hitting was the vast majority of their shots — a sparkling 62.2 percent (28 of 45), including a dazzling 56.3 percent (9 of 16) from 3-point range.

"It's extraordinary, shooting 62 percent on the road," Martelli said. "But we never make it easy because

SEE DONALDSON, B2

The Rams, once nationally ranked, lose their fourth straight A-10 game and the fifth in the last six.

BY PAUL KENYON  
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

SOUTH KINGSTOWN — It is not a slump anymore. It is more like a free fall for the University of Rhode Island's basketball team; an unexpected, hard-to-understand tumble through the ranks of the Atlantic 10.

The Rams, nationally ranked when the A-10 season began, lost for the fourth time in a row and the fifth in the last six games yesterday, 90-83, to Saint Joseph's at the Ryan Center.

In some ways, this one was the

hardest to take because Rhode Island could not say, as it could in most of the others, that it played well but simply came up short. The Rams looked like a team playing without confidence as they fell behind by as many as 19 points, even though the Hawks had to play a significant part of the game with their two best players on the bench because of foul trouble.

A late rally kept alive the statistic of never having lost a game by double figures all season. But that means nothing with the team now at 20-8 overall and 6-7 in the conference.

"We're struggling. I don't know any other way to put it. We're struggling," said co-captain Will Daniels, Center.

SEE RAMS, B2

## BC's Silva trying hard to measure up

Things begin in earnest for East Providence native and standout safety Jamie Silva at the NFL Combine.

BY SHALISE MANZA YOUNG  
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

INDIANAPOLIS — Like most things around the NFL, the league's pre-draft Combine has become big business. Part meat market, part track meet, a four-day job interview — the event can sometimes make or break a bud-

ding professional football player. Especially for a player who isn't considered a first-day pick. East Providence native and Boston College safety Jamie Silva is among the players at this year's Combine, and despite his long list of accolades — he was an Associated Press and Walter Camp first-team All-American, a finalist for the Jim Thorpe Award (given to the country's best defensive back) and a first-team All-Atlantic Coast Conference

honoree — he isn't considered a high draft pick.

Three AFC scouts in Indianapolis spoke highly of Silva, however. One said the former Townies star has some of the best ball-hawking skills he's seen (Silva had eight interceptions last season). Another called him "tough, smart, a team leader," and said, "he'll be a great special-teams player and a good late draft pick for someone."

SEE SILVA, B5

## Francona and Sox are perfect fit

A three-year contract extension makes Terry Francona baseball's third-highest-paid manager.

BY SEAN McADAM  
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

FORT MYERS, Fla. — In directing the Red Sox to two World Series in the last four seasons — two more than his predecessors in the job had managed in the previous



FRANCONA

86 years combined — Terry Francona established himself as one of the best managers in baseball. Now, he'll be paid like one.

and the Red Sox yesterday morning completed negotiations on a three-year extension that will keep Francona under contract

through at least the 2011 season. His current contract, signed as part of a two-year extension in March 2006, was set to expire at the end of this season.

The deal will pay Francona \$3.5 million in 2009 — exactly double his base salary for 2008 — \$3.75 million in 2010 and \$4 million in 2011.

The club also holds two options for 2012 and 2013, with a \$750,000

SEE RED SOX, B3